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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY

MARCH 14, 2003

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for March 14, 2003. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

Cumhuriyet/Tercuman/Ekspres/Dunya/Radikal/Mil liye t/Sabah/Turkiye: Charged with having provided assistance and support to the PKK and being a center for actions undertaken in contradiction to "the indivisibility of the state", the political party HADEP was ordered definitively closed by a unanimous vote by the Constitutional Court good per articles 68 and 69 of the Constitution under articles 101 and 103 of the Political Parties Law. HADEP's property will be turned over to the Treasury Department. 46 HADEP officials, including its national chair, Murat Bozlak, have been banned from politics for five years. HADEP will appeal against the decision to the European Court of Human Rights. At the same time, the Chief Public Prosecutor of the Court of Cassation, Sabih Kanadoglu, also filed a petition at the Constitutional Court against DEHAP, founded as the substitute for HADEP, and demanded DEHAP's closure for good.

Hurriyet: Turkey gave support to clearing of land mines, which killed 668 citizens during intensive PKK terrorism. According to the proposal, Turkey will clear all these land mines in 7 years. CHP deputy, Onur Oymen, pointed that despite the halting of PKK terror, some 16 persons, including children, were killed by land mines in 2001. Oymen said dismantling of the land mines would cost Turkey USD 300-400 million.

Cumhuriyet/Bolge: The US Land Forces Vice Commander, Gen. Michael Dotson, who was accompanied by high ranking American officials from Incirlik AB, met with Lt. Gen. Yalcin Kavukcuoglu, the Commander of Turkish Navy Command in Iskenderun. After the talks at the Navy Command, Gen. Dotson visited the Iskenderun port and was briefed about the military shipments. After Gen. Dotson's visit to Iskenderun, the Turkish Land Forces Commander, Gen. Aytac Yalman, also inspected Turkish military units in Adana and Iskenderun. Gen. Yalman said the Turkish units were in excellent condition and were ready to fulfill any mission the Turkish people would give them.

Radikal: In order to rescue the historical monuments in the Southeast from becoming a target in a war on Iraq, the Cultural Ministry will hang white and blue posters on them. The posters will be visible to pilots. It is reported that objects in regional museums will be transferred to Kayseri when the war breaks out. According to Hurriyet, Mardin's Provincial Director of Culture, Mustafa Kemal, said warning flags would be hoisted at the Mardin museum, the Deyrul Zafaran Monastery, the Mardin castle, the Grand Mosque, the Kasimiye Medrese, and the Kirkklar Church, while artefacts in the Mardin museum would be moved to Ankara.

Cumhuriyet/Sabah: It is required of Turkish journalists working in the region to carry a yellow press card, and foreign journalists must get credentials from the Prime Ministry's Press and Information General Directorate. In addition to the press center at the Dedeman Hotel in

Diyarbakir, it has been decided that press centers should be established in Silopi and Cizre as well. The number of the reporters, most of whom are foreigners, has reached to 400. Another press center has been established at Iskenderun Navy Base Command.

Evrensel: The Sirnak Governorate distributed handbooks on "Chemical and Biological War" sent by the Civil Defense Directorate. The pamphlets contain information about "Biological & Chemical War and Countermeasures" and "First Aid." A civil defense meeting to which the public will be invited will be held at the Municipal Wedding Hall.

Evrensel: The Americans are parading in Diyarbakir's streets in foreign plated cars. One can see them in all luxurious restaurants, hotels, shopping centers, and places of entertainment. It is also claimed that they have rented luxurious houses in Hamravat and Demetevleri complexes. In Birecik, some unidentified persons stoned the convoy carrying US military equipment while passing the bridge over the Euphrates.

Cumhuriyet: CHP's Provincial Chairman of Siirt, Mervan Dilek, resigned from his position. He had been CHP's provincial chairman for a decade. Mervan Dilek's brother-in-law, Dr. Ekrem Bilek, was elected to the parliament on CHP's ticket on November 3, 2002, but was not reelected on March 9, 2003.

Bolge: A group of anti-war lawyers in Adana, announcing a press statement in front of the Court Hall, said Turkey was literally being occupied by US soldiers and insisted on peace.

Bolge: The hearing of Adana Mayor, Aytac Durak, who was accused of false tax statements, started at the Court of First Instance in Adana. During the closed hearing, Mayor Durak denied the allegations. Mayor Durak said all the real estate that belonged to him and his wife had been reported correctly. He said he owned a construction company with his brother before he was elected, and had built houses for more than 2,000 families. The court decided to wait for written answers from the Interior Ministry and the Trade Registry Office concerning the case, and adjourned the hearing until May 14.  
HOLTZ